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ON NAZARETH HILL

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NAZARETH FROM LITTLE HERMON

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ON NAZARETH HILL

BY

ALBERT EDWARD BAILEY, 1871—

LECTURER IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
NEWTON THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION

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TO

THE MOTHER AND FIRST SPIRITUAL
TEACHER OF MY CHILDREN

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ON NAZARETH HILL

IT is an afternoon in spring. All day the little shop has resounded with the blow of mallet and the swish of bow-lathe. But now the carpenter hangs up his tools, and turning to the lad who has been his helper says:

"Come, son, enough of work! There are yet two hours before sunset, before the Sabbath comes with its rest and its worship. Let us climb the hill together."

Together they put up the front of wood before the entrance to their cave-

shop, and having secured it with bar and lock, turn to the narrow path that leads upward between the little stone huts of their village. As they climb, the hills begin to peer at them over the southern brim of the bowl-shaped valley in which Nazareth lies — Ebal purple with distance; Moreh close at hand, gray and bare; westward the haunch of Carmel, spotted with oaks; south-eastward grim Gilboa, which with Moreh all but blocks the view to Gilead whose deeply-cloven sides are burning in the evening sun like an opal pink and purple. And now as they near the top they look down upon Esdraelon, that sea-like plain whose further waves

break upon Samaria fifteen miles away, and whose nearer are lost beneath the precipitous cliffs of the hills of Nazareth. There is no haze to blur the image. Every village on its vast surface stands out sharp and brown. On the hither side every checker-patch of new-plowed land glows red, and every strip of field tells by the particular hue of green that clothes it the story of its sowing. But before the eye has traversed half the plain the stripes and checkers fuse into streaks of purple, and the purple melts into the violet of the southern hills. And over the enameled plain drift the cloud-shadows.

The boy has been running ahead and like a young goat of the flock scorning the zigzag path for more precipitous courses.

"Here is the very top, father!" he cries; "I can see down the other side into the long valley of Sepphoris. There to the west is the sea, and northward over Safed is great Hermon!"

"Yes, the very top!" says the carpenter as he toils up at last. "Surely Moses on Pisgah saw no fairer land, from the scarlet flowers at our feet to the 'excellency of Carmel and Sharon' and the 'glory of Lebanon.' 'He hath made everything beautiful in its time!'

"But, son, I have come up here with you for another reason. There is no landscape in all our country so filled with meaning for Jehovah's people; no spot like this where one can gather at a single sweep the great lessons of our history. Many a time you have heard from your mother's lips and mine the stories of this plain and of these hills; but now I want to go over them again with you, so that when next week we journey to the Holy City and for the first time you stand within its gates and become a 'son of the Law,' the Doctors will not think your parents have been neglectful."

Together they sit upon a heap of

stones that some shepherd has piled among the flowers — the lad between his father's knees — and the great review begins.

DO you see here to the west this long ridge of Carmel, its back rippling like the back of a grayhound as he crouches to spring? And on the flank there to the south-west, that solitary white spot against the sky? What is that?"

"That, father, is the altar that marks where Elijah overcame the priests of Baal."

"Yes, my son, that spot commemorates a glorious victory! Our people

had forgotten Jehovah; they had denied the God that led their fathers across the Red Sea and through the wilderness, that smote great kings before them, that gave them this goodly heritage. Wicked Jezebel with her priests from Sidon had thrown down Jehovah's altars and had made Baal the god of the land; and all Israel was worshiping him under every green tree and beside every spring. Then came Elijah the Tishbite like a flash of lightning upon Ahab: 'Gather to me all Israel unto Mt. Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty' — and there in the presence of the king and all the multitude he proved

the impotence of Baal and the living power of Jehovah!"

"But why did he have to kill the priests?"

"Why, you see, my son, it was a great crisis in our history. If Jezebel had had her way she would have blotted out all memory of Jehovah forever. There was need of the sternest action. I suppose that Elijah felt himself to be the minister of that righteous law which says Thou shalt have no other gods before me. . . . He that sacrificeth to any god save to Jehovah only, shall be utterly destroyed'; he felt that he was heir to all those precedents of doom from the serpent-plague

in the Wilderness to the pestilence at Peor. 'Our God is a consuming fire!'"

"Must all prophets of God destroy the wicked as he did?"

"Not without God's command, certainly. Amos and Isaiah did not kill. But perhaps the cup of wrath in their day was not full."

"Do you think, father, that the Messiah will be like Elijah?"

"I don't know, son. When I think of the Roman legions in every city, the Roman eagles in the very courts of Jehovah, I tremble to think of what the Messiah might have to do. The prophets speak of a terrible day of

Jehovah when '*He will break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*

"Mother says she prefers to think of those other verses about the Messiah:

'*The bruised reed he will not break, the smoking flax he will not quench. . . . He shall lead his flock like a shepherd.*"

"Yes, the prophets say that about him, too."

"Will the great Doctors at Jerusalem tell me what the Messiah will be like if I ask them?"

"You may ask them, laddie!"

NOW following the sky line to the left of Carmel do you see where the hills break and a deep shadow runs out toward us to a little village on the plain's edge? That is the pass of Megiddo, the chief highway of armies from Sharon into Galilee. Every army that ever swept across this plain made that pass its entrance or its exit. Behind the village you see the fortress where the Roman legion guards the defile. What happened there, son?"

"That is where good king Josiah met his death. He came to attack the king of Egypt because the king of Egypt was going to attack the king of Babylon, Josiah's ally."

"Right. And a more unfortunate thing could not have occurred than good Josiah's death. I never could understand such a providence. Josiah had just purified the land of idols, swept away all the abominations of his father Manasseh, repaired the temple, restored the Law; and he was just beginning a reign that would have brought righteousness and prosperity and peace to Israel. Yet he was cut off by an untimely fate, and the kingdom soon fell to the sword of Babylon. Why should God allow it!"

"The Rabbi at the synagogue told us boys once that king Josiah was foolish to attack Necho; he should have stayed

at home. He said that God never saved anyone who was rash. I asked the Rabbi if God would save the Messiah if he should jump off the high cliff below the village, and the Rabbi said that the Messiah wouldn't tempt God that way. Perhaps Josiah tempted God."

"Perhaps so, son."

THERE'S another little village huddling close under the hills to the south of us. Do you know what happened at Taanach?"

"No, father, not at Taanach; but near Taanach I know that Sisera and his Canaanites were defeated."

"That's right. And do you remember how Deborah sings:

'The kings came and fought;
Then fought the kings of Canaan,
In Taanach by the waters of Megiddo:
They took no gain of money.
From heaven fought the stars,
From their courses they fought against Sisera.
The river Kishon swept them away,
That ancient river, the river Kishon.
O my soul, march on with strength!'

You can see the long line of their march from Harosheth here at the extreme right, where the Kishon breaks through between Carmel and the hills of Galilee.

They straggled along the plain, thinking to cut us in two — the tribes of the north from the tribes of the south. They trusted in their chariots of iron; but Deborah and Barak trusted in the living God! Up from Sinai Jehovah came and smote them:

'Jehovah, when thou wentest forth out of Seir,
When thou marchedst out of the field of Edom,
The earth trembled, the heavens also dropped,
Yea, the clouds dropped water.
The mountains quaked at the presence of Jehovah.'

So the Canaanite fled; his power was broken, and the wicked rites with which he meant to ensnare Israel perished with him!"

"What rites do you mean, father?"

"This is what I mean. A man in Taanach while digging a cistern last summer came upon a piece of wall, evidently part of an old city wall. There was a great threshold of stone with sockets in it and the stumps of doorposts at either end. And as he dug below it he found a jar, still whole, and in the jar the bones of a little child. The king of Taanach when he built the city must have slain his own son to purchase the gods' favor. Israel

had begun to practise these bloody customs. Do you remember how Hiel the Bethelite rebuilt Jericho? — 'He laid the foundation thereof with the loss of Abiram his first born, and set up the gates thereof with the loss of his youngest son Segub.' If Canaan had conquered us at Taanach we might still be offering human sacrifices, and I today might have no first-born son! But Jehovah has taught us a better way. We may not offer the 'fruit of our body for the sin of our soul,' but may sacrifice a bullock or a sheep or even two turtle-doves."

"What is the sacrifice for, father? Why does God want something killed?"

"'Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.' The Rabbis tell us that God being righteous demands the death of the sinner; but since we have all sinned, he allows us to redeem ourselves by offering a substitute. God accepts the life of the victim instead of our life. 'If a man sin,' says Leviticus, 'let him bring a lamb without spot, and the priest shall kill it before Jehovah and shall make atonement for him concerning his sin, and he shall be forgiven.'"

"Yes, father, I learned the verses at the synagogue. But mother taught me some verses that are different. Listen:

'I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings I will not accept them. . . . But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.' And David says, 'For thou delightest not in sacrifice; else would I give it. . . The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou will not despise.'

Mother says that she dares not refuse the lamb, but she does not see why God needs the sacrifice. I asked the Rabbi why we had to bring sacrifices and he said 'Because it is the Law.' Do you

think the great Doctors would tell me why the Law says one thing and the Prophets another?"

"I don't know, my boy. You may ask. But this I know: we must obey the Law till God shows us clearly some better way."

JUST above Taanach is a saddle in the nearer range of hills, and another saddle in the farther range. Beyond the first is little Dothan; beyond the second is great Sebaste, old Samaria. Do you remember what happened in those places?"

"Yes, father. In Dothan Joseph was sold by his brethren and carried

to Egypt. I always loved Joseph, because when he had his brothers in his power and could have harmed them — as they deserved to be harmed — he forgave them and saved them and their families from the famine. I asked mother once, 'If Joseph had been Elijah, would he have put to death the priests of Baal?' But she only smiled and asked me what I would have done! Father, did you ever go down to Egypt?"

"Yes, once, when you were little — too little to remember."

"There is another Dothan story that I like. The prophet Elisha and his servant were once surrounded by the

chariots of Syria. The servant was afraid, till God opened his eyes and showed him the mountains round about, filled with horses and chariots of fire. Father, does God send angels to protect everybody, or only prophets?"

"What says the Psalm? — '*The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.*' And I think he sends a triple guard for those who are too young to protect themselves, — father, mother and the angels!"

THEN just over the second range is wicked Sebaste — 'the proud coronet of the drunkards of Ephraim' which

Assyria destroyed and Herod rebuilt to please his Roman master. There Herod murdered his wife Mariamne and his two sons; there the heathen hold their shows in the stadium and the theater that he built. The name of Jehovah is not heard there. It is a city abhorred. And round about it live the Samaritans who say they are Jews but are not. Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. When we go up to the feasts at Jerusalem, we Jews of Galilee usually take the longer road through Perea so that we need not pass through their borders."

"Why do the Jews despise them, father? Are they wicked men?"

"Not necessarily. But years ago they married heathen wives and would not divorce them to come under the law of Ezra. Our fathers would not let them worship in the temple. Then they built a temple of their own on Mt. Gerizim; and ever since, the two peoples have gone their separate ways. The years have not softened the hatred."

"When the Messiah comes, father, will he rule over the Samaritans also?"

"I do not know. The Samaritans are looking for a Messiah."

"Then when he comes, will the two peoples stop hating each other and all go up to Jerusalem to worship?"

"Would to God it might be so, my son!"

"Father, may we go through Samaria to the Passover?"

"I was planning to return that way.

NOW see how the hills about Sebaste rise eastward into the great mass of Ebal and Gerizim. From here the two look like one mountain, but a deep shadow shows where a valley cuts them in two. Into that valley came our father Abraham, and there he set up his first altar to Jehovah in the land of promise. Into that valley came Jacob with his flocks. Eastward of it he bought his parcel of ground and digged

his well. Into that valley came victorious Joshua and all Israel with him. There on the slopes of Ebal and Gerizim he rehearsed before them the law of Jehovah and heard them shout the oath that Jehovah should be their God forever. Fickle people! Feeble oath! Ebal is the saddest mountain in this whole panorama; for it is a perpetual reminder of the faithlessness of Israel, of the curse fulfilled, of a people divided and scattered.

'How long, O God! Wilt thou be angry forever?
Shall thy jealousy burn like a fire?
Wherefore should the nations say, Where is their God?'

AND there is old Gilboa! How finely its buttressing hills rise up from the plain to the bold crest, and how defiantly the crest leaps down to Jordan! Famous old hill, witness of our most glorious triumph and of our most ignominious defeat. Under its swift-falling brow, hidden from our sight by the slope of Moreh, is the Well of Harod. There Gideon tried his men to find who was brave, and thence he sent flying home through the glens the twenty and two thousand who were 'fearful and trembling.' Across the valley of Jezreel northward on the slope of Moreh lay the hosts of Midian with their

cattle and their tents, as locusts for multitude. Were there ever such odds! The thousands of the children of the East against the three hundred of Gideon! But Gideon had seen the angel of Jehovah and had heard him say, 'God is with thee, thou mighty man of valor!' So with his lamps and his pitchers and his ram's horns down the valley he drove the hosts of Midian and he scattered kings 'as when it snoweth upon Zalmon.' Learn the lesson, son: God inspires one man, one man inspires three hundred, and three hundred put to flight the armies of the aliens! That is always God's way.

"Very different was that other battle fought on the same field. In the last days of Saul came the Philistines once more to regain their supremacy over us. Not through the narrow defiles of Judah but here in this great valley they sought us, and they camped there like Midian on the southern slopes of Moreh, while Saul and his men gathered to battle like Gideon by the Well. But Saul saw no angel: God had departed from him. Oh, the horror of that blackness may you never know, my boy, when man stretches out his feeble hands to God and finds him not! In his despair Saul that night passed down the slope, left the Philistine sentries far to the

east, rounded Moreh, here, to this little village of Endor half way up its long northern slope. There the king who once had banished from the land all those who had familiar spirits now sought help of a sorceress to bring him the help of Samuel to bring him again one word from God! But there the witch read to him his fear and therein his doom; till the great king swooned before her, and rose with the morning to stagger back to his death.

'*Ye mountains of Gilboa,*
Let there be no dew nor rain upon you,
neither fields of offerings:
For there the shield of the mighty was
cast away defiled,

The shield of Saul, as of one not anointed with oil.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!'"

"Father, why did God take his spirit from Saul?"

"Samuel said it was because of Saul's disobedience in the matter of Amalek.

'To obey is better than sacrifice,
And to harken than the fat of rams.'"

"I asked mother the same question once and she quoted the same verse. Then she said that if Saul had not shut his heart against David, but had rejoiced in David's success and strength-

ened his throne by David's loyalty, God would have forgiven that one sin. And I have never forgotten how she looked at me when she said, 'Hatred towards others locks every door of the heart; love to others lets them in and God also.'"

"I think your mother is right, son."

THERE is Jezreel, father, perched on the nearest foothill of Gilboa! When we go past it on the way to Jerusalem, I wish we could go up there a little while."

"You may if you like, for our first night's halt is by the spring of Jezreel. But why do you want to go there?"

"I want to stand in Naboth's vineyard, the place where the man of God met Ahab and dared to tell even the king that he had wronged a common man. Father, I should like to be a prophet!"

"Perhaps God will give you a prophet's work to do. There are surely wrongs enough to right, and wickedness in high places to rebuke. But there are prophets and prophets. I should not want you to be 'zealous for Jehovah' in the way Jehu was. He also met a king in Jezreel, you remember, in Naboth's vineyard, and slew him and his mother Jezebel, and caused the seventy sons of Ahab at Samaria to be slain,

and all the worshipers of Baal. His 'zeal for Jehovah,' of which he was so proud, brought Israel to its deepest pit of degradation; and Jehovah was no nearer the hearts of his people than before."

"Mother says that she thinks God never spoke to Jehu, but he thought that his own ambition speaking to him was the voice of God. How does one know when God speaks, father?"

"I don't know surely, my son. But I think if the voice urges us to do something good, it is from above."

THERE is another village that we cannot see, lying just around the edge

of Moreh, opposite Jezreel. Do you remember about it?"

"Yes, that is Shunem. That is where the maiden lived who was true to her shepherd lover even when king Solomon wanted to marry her. That is the place also where the good woman prepared a little room over the gate for Elisha and made him welcome whenever he came."

"And how did Elisha repay her?"

"When her little boy died of a sunstroke, Elisha brought him to his own chamber and prayed over the body, and God sent the child's life back again. That is a wonderful story! I think Elijah was noble when he rebuked king

Ahab in Jezreel; but I think Elisha was beautiful when he gave the boy back to his mother. I wish — I wish I could be a prophet like Elisha!"

DO you see this next village, lying here full on the face of Moreh? That is Nain. Nothing ever happened there. But a good woman lives there who once did me a kindness. She is now a widow and she has a son only a year old. My boy, if you ever have a chance, be good to her.

HOW high and level the land runs beyond Jordan! It fills in the gaps to left and right of Moreh and stretches way to the south beyond Gilboa. That

to the right of Moreh and Gilboa is Peræa, the Gilead of our fathers. It is the land through which Abraham came with his cattle on his way to Shechem. In the purple valley that makes down to Jordan just south of Gilboa flows the Jabbok, where Jacob fleeing from Laban and afraid to meet Esau, met God and wrestled for a blessing. We shall go through the borders of Peræa on our way to the Passover, through Bethabara and Pella to Jericho. There are many faithful Jews there, but the heathen are there too.

"To the left of Moreh lies the region of Decapolis — the ten cities of the Greeks. You can see one of them there

now, due east, hard by the nearer top of Tabor. That is Gadara, heathen Gadara. The building that gleams white in the sun is the temple of Jupiter; the huge black building near it is the theater. My son, never enter a Greek city! The Greeks love what is beautiful rather than what is good. The Greeks love wine and song and the dance; they spend their time at the baths, at the play, at the games and the banquet and the house of the harlot. They have lost the sense of sin, the passion for righteousness. They think they have found wisdom, but it is the wisdom of fools who fear not God.

'My son, hear the instruction of thy father,
And forsake not the law of thy mother.
Enter not into the path of the wicked
And walk not in the way of evil men.

For the lips of the strange woman drop honey,
And her mouth is smoother than oil:
But in the end she is more bitter than wormwood,
Sharp as a two-edged sword.

Behold, the fear of Jehovah that is wisdom,
And to depart from evil, that is understanding.'"

THERE is Tabor next, father! What a fine round top it has, and how the oaks grow to the very summit! Barak couldn't have found a better place to collect his men; for there, hid among the trees, they could see the whole plain and watch every movement of Sisera. What is that tumble-down building on top? Is there anything in Scripture about it?"

"Not in the sacred books. But in the book of Maccabees you will read how Antiochus of Syria came down about two hundred years ago to blot out our religion and force upon us the gods of the Greeks; how he fortified

Tabor and many other strong-holds. That ruin is his fortress. Those were the most terrible years that ever came to the chosen people. Listen to what the Psalm says of that fearful war:

'O God, the heathen have come into thine inheritance;
Thy holy temple have they defiled;
They have laid Jerusalem in heaps.
The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be food unto the birds of the heavens,
The flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.
Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem,
And there was none to bury them.'

But God raised us up a deliverer, even like Gideon; and gave us a king even like David; and once more the smoke of daily sacrifice rose from the temple courts. But lust of power came in to steal our rulers' hearts away from God, — and after that, the Roman.

THERE to the north of Tabor, son, is the hollow in which the sea of Gennesaret lies; beyond the gulf, Bashan; and there to the north-east, glorious Hermon, its head streaming with snow! People sometimes call the mountain 'the Old Man,' but I like to think of it differently. When the clouds gather round it and hide it from sight, I think

of Jehovah who dwelleth in thick darkness: '*Clouds and darkness are round about him.*' And when the wind scatters the clouds, and the glory of the snow rises up into the glory of the blue, I think of that great white throne whose foundations are justice and judgment.

'*Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever;*
A scepter of righteousness is the scepter
of thy kingdom.'"

"Oh, father, see little Gath Hephor on its nob of a hill so close to us. Was Jonah really born there?"

"The people in the village say so. They are very proud to show his tomb there under the tree."

"Mother says that when I was not four years old, at bedtime I used always to say, 'Mamma, tell me about Jonah!' I suppose it was his running away, and the storm, and the great fish, and the gourd that I liked. Do you remember when we went to Capernaum last fall to build that shed for Zebedee? He took me out one night on the lake with the fishermen and we had a big storm. When the squall came up and everybody thought that the boat was going to capsize, the heathen fishermen began to pray to all sorts of gods. One Greek boy kneeled down in the bottom of the boat in a foot of water and vowed that if he got home safely he would make a

pilgrimage to Tiberias and give his best knife to Apheia the Fish-goddess there. That's the way the sailors in Jonah's boat did."

"Did you pray too, son?"

"I don't remember that I did. But I remember thinking what a wonderful thing a storm is, and how the wind is God's messenger; and I felt warm in my heart to think that God was so near. Father, do you think that God will ever save the heathen?"

"I don't think so. Why do you ask?"

"Well, it says in Jonah that when the heathen sailors prayed to Jehovah, he stilled the waves; and when Jonah preached to Nineveh the people re-

pented; and when God blamed Jonah for getting angry over the gourd he said, '*And should I not have regard for Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left?*' Mother says that just as nobody can run away from God, so no one can get beyond his love; but the Rabbi at the synagogue says that mother better read Joshua if she wants to know what God thinks of the heathen!"

"These things are hard to understand."

"I think, father, that I love Jonah better than any one in the Scripture."

"That is strange; why should you?"

"Do you remember that in the storm he confessed that he was the guilty one, and begged the sailors to let him die in their stead; and when God saved him from that fate, he went to Nineveh and saved that whole great city from destruction? The other prophets are always condemning the heathen, but Jonah saved more heathen than all the other prophets put together."

"I never thought of it that way before. What a queer laddie you are!

WE have almost completed the circle! Behind our hill, in the long valley between us and Upper Galilee lies the

'Way of the Sea.' Here and there you get glimpses of the road between the hills. It comes from Damascus, beyond Hermon, and from Babylon and Nineveh where our fathers languished; the Way of Despair one might almost call it, for at one end of it lies Exile and at the other Slavery. This is only a branch that makes straight to the sea from Capernaum. Another branch goes between us and Tabor and crosses the plain to Megiddo. Another runs along the heights beyond Gennesaret, then descends to the Jordan at Bethabara, mounts again to Gilboa and passes by Dothan down to Egypt. All day these roads are busy with traffic.

Look southward once more to the great plain — do you see that line of black specks moving against the green fields? — merchants from the East with their silks and their spices and their goodly pearls? Turn again now to this northern road. See the company of horsemen spurring out from behind Sepphoris! The sun gleams from their helmets and flashes from their shields. And the litter in the midst, with the banners, carries no doubt some ambassador from Rome, or some new governor for a city of the Decapolis, or some favorite of the Emperor coming to take the cure at the hot baths of Tiberias or Gadara. If one wishes to see all the kingdoms

of the world and the glory of them one has only to stand for a day on this watch-tower!

"Ah, look, son! There's a sad sight. Coming down the path from little Gath Hephor do you see the man on the white horse, and the two other horsemen? I know that little group. Good old Ezra ben Joaz told me only last week about the restlessness of his youngest boy. He had seen the Gentiles daily pass his village on their journeys, heard the rumors of great cities with their games and their pageants, their luxury and their power; and he begged his father to give him now his portion and let him see the world. He is headed

now for the far country. He will see Antioch and Ephesus and Rome; and when he has spent all he will come back again to his father's house!"

"But do you think his father will take him back again when he has once chosen to go away, and has spent in wickedness all his living?"

"Take him back! Will not old Ezra's heart go with him into every city, and suffer with him in every sin, and pray night and day for God to turn home again the young man's foolish feet? Ah! son, never till you have a boy of your own will you know the infinite longing and the infinite forgiveness of a father's heart!"

"Father, — is God — like you?"

"Don't, dear boy!"

AND so we come to the sea, that great deep that our people do not love and never understood, — unfathomable as the judgments of God. We only know that out of it have come the floods of an alien faith and a cruel despotism — that beyond it are Greece and Rome. There at the end of the road beyond the last hill is Ptolemais, whither their galleys flock. There in the harbor almost beneath the sun are the triremes and the merchantmen, like black spear-wounds on a shield of gold. They are the symbols of our slavery, and of the

wealth and luxury and pomp of the world after which the Gentiles seek, and after which, alas! the hearts of God's people are lusting till it seems as if Mammon would again drive Jehovah from his temple! — And in the galleys come the legions with their eagles to feed even on our poverty and to awe into silence the last whisper of hope. O Lord, when wilt thou speak comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned? Yet we will not despair:

'*Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in justice. And a man shall be a hiding-place from*

the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as streams of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. . . . And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit. And the spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him. . . . With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth. . . . Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end.'

"The sun has touched the sea. The shadow of Carmel has crept across the plain even to Jezreel. The great ruby cloud that hangs above Gilead has

turned almost to ashes. Let us go down; for mother is waiting for us there by the spring — do you see her with the black water-jar? But tell me this, my boy, before we go. When God's own time has come, and you hear the voice that in your heart you know is His — calling as it called Gideon and Elisha and Barak and the host of others who have wrought valiantly for Him — calling it matters not to what service or what sacrifice, will you listen? will you follow?"

ILLUSTRATIONS

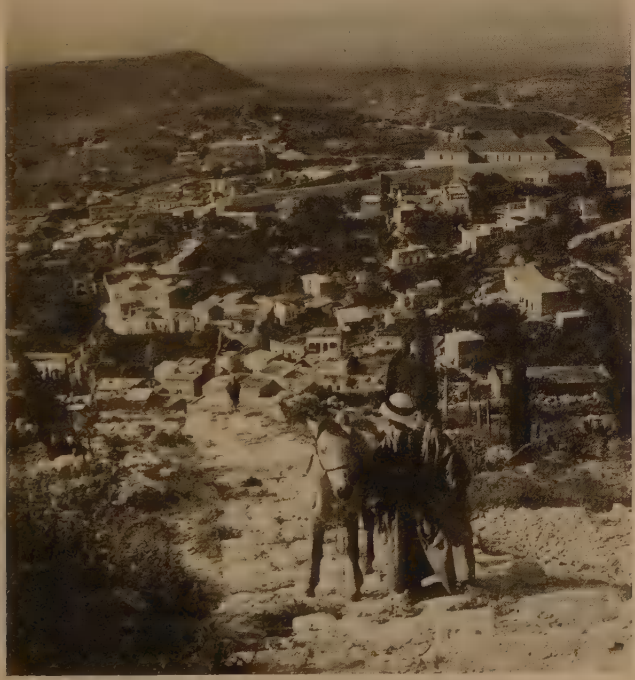
THE *reader who desires to reconstruct the backgrounds of this story should study carefully the pictures here appended. Naturally the view-point of the pictures cannot always be Nazareth Hill, for the distances render the ordinary camera ineffective. But the position of Nazareth with reference to each picture is usually indicated.*

The writer suggests that the entire story should be read first, the map and pictures should be examined next, and lastly the story should be re-read, with a reference to the map and pictures at the beginning of each division of the story.

VIEW SOUTH FROM NAZARETH HILL

NO camera can ever do justice to this view. It may catch the unimportant details of the village at our feet, but the magic of the broad plain quite eludes it, and the Samaritan hills, so sharp to the natural eye, fuse with the sky and the plain in a mist of vagueness. Yet this picture hints at the facts: the hollow bowl in which Nazareth lies, the southern rim where the details of the picture suddenly cease, the veiled plain that runs level for fifteen miles to Jenin and Megiddo. The highest point of the vague sky-line, to the right of the center, is Ebal-Gerizim; Gilboa and Little Hermon are out of sight to the left, Carmel to the right. Carry the horizon clear round the circle and you have precisely the limits of our story.

On these hills the boy Jesus played. He saw the white mists of dawn rise from their beds in the hollows of Esdraelon or in the more distant gulf of Jordan, grow golden in the early sun and hasten away. He saw "Jehovah march from Seir" in the great thunder-clouds that pile up miles high over Moab, or descend like a flood upon the mud-houses till they dissolve into the sand. He considered the lilies of the field that blazon these hills every spring with thrice the glories of Solomon and then with the siroccos of May become fit only to cast into the oven. From these hills he watched the deluge of the summer heat as it floods the plain and causes the very mountains to quiver and take refuge in pools of aerial water. He learned to discern the face of the sky, to read the meaning of the red and lowering sun, to watch the eagles gather together over the worn-out caravan-camel by the wayside. From these hills his eye followed the merchants pursuing their dreams of wealth along the white roads that thread the landscape. He saw the sower go forth to sow in the ruddy plain; he saw the many-colored reapers return at night, bringing their sheaves with them; he saw the yellow smoke puff up from a hundred threshing-floors and scatter away to leeward. And most marvelous of all, he managed to link the thought of God for all time with these simple elements of his boyhood experience. His pure heart saw God in everything.



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VIEW SOUTH FROM NAZARETH HILL

NAZARETH LOOKING EAST

THIS picture shows how Nazareth lies in a hollow. A ring of low hill-tops quite surrounds the town so that one must always climb to look over. The height to the left is the view-point for our story. The large building on the slope is an English mission school for girls. The English protestant church is in the left foreground; the dome of the Greek church that marks the traditional site of the synagogue in which Jesus preached may be seen over the next building to the right; and a Muslim minaret rises among the cypress trees to the right of the dome. The Roman Catholic Church of the Annunciation is out of sight on the right. These buildings give a hint of the religious divisions of the city. Of the 7147 inhabitants, 2774 are Greek Christians, 1557 are Mohammedans, 1189 are Roman Catholics, 302 are Protestants and 1294 are scattering.

Most of the houses in the picture are modern. The ancient village lay rather to the rear of the present one. There are no authentic sites connected with the life of Jesus. Crusading and Byzantine churches were located for pious rather than for archæological reasons. Yet located they were, as soon as the arm of a Christian emperor shielded the Christian from Jewish hatred. The first basilica was built at Nazareth before 336 A.D., probably at Constantine's order, by Joseph, Count of Tiberias. From this building some monoliths of red granite and some considerable areas of mosaic pavement still survive in the church of the Annunciation. The crusaders under Tancred (1100) found this church in ruins, but rebuilt it. Recent excavations are bringing much of this second building to light. In it worshiped St. Francis of Assisi (1219) and St. Louis of France (1254). Less than ten years later, Beibars of Egypt encamped with his army on Tabor and sent a detachment to destroy all churches and massacre all Christians. The Franciscans returned within sixty years and with varying success have held the town for Christianity ever since. Napoleon lodged here in 1799; it was for him his farthest East and his first Waterloo.

Photo by S. U. Mitman, Ph.D.

NAZARETH, LOOKING EAST

THE PLACE OF SACRIFICE

YOU are now on the oak-dotted slopes of lower Galilee and are looking due south at the Place of Sacrifice — the little knob under the cross. Nazareth is fifteen miles to your left; Haifa is nine miles to your right. In the valley between you and Carmel flows the Kishon.

The white Carmelite shrine on this south-east haunch of Carmel is one of the most conspicuous objects in a wide landscape, and the view from the building is correspondingly grand. Your eye sweeps the whole horizon of upper Galilee to towering Hermon, leaps the Jordan to the high level sky-line of the Hauran and the Decapolis, follows the billowy mountain contours of Samaria, and loses definite vision far to the south in the violet haze that hovers over Sharon. Esdraelon, with all its scenes and its memories, rolls out like a magic carpet at your feet. "Heavenly" is the only way to describe the long morning the writer spent on the roof of this little shrine — heavenly the cobalt of the sky, heavenly the fresh breeze from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, heavenly the ever-shifting pattern of color woven by the cloud-shadows on the gorgeous loom of the plain. The spirit of Elijah is surely near. There below is the road from Jezreel up which drove Ahab and his priests to the contest. Around us the rocks are dense with witnesses. We hear the shouts of prayer that batter at Baal's gates; we see the blood flow. There is the spring from which Elijah draws his water. The fire of Jehovah falls! The frenzied people rush upon the vanquished and drive them down the precipitous slope beneath us to the silver thread of Kishon. And there to the north-west is the rounded summit of Carmel up which the servant runs to behold the sea and the "cloud no bigger than a man's hand."

Photo by S. U. Mitman, Ph.D.

THE PLACE OF SACRIFICE

MARY'S FOUNTAIN, NAZARETH

SOMEWHERE within a mile of every village in Palestine is a spring to which a well-worn path leads. Night and morning, and as often as necessary in between, the women and girls of the household walk to the spring and return with their heavy water-jars balanced jauntily on their heads. A mile walk under these conditions would tax the strength of even an American woman!

It was to such a spring in Nazareth that Mary came daily. Since Nazareth has only one spring, there is no doubt of its authenticity. The only question is whether in Mary's day the water was taken at the spring itself or at some conveniently arranged spout or trough at some distance from the spring. At the present day the latter method is used. This picture shows the place where for centuries the women and children have filled their jars. There is a platform, approached from the road by a couple of stone steps; a shallow arch of stone, under which is an ancient sarcophagus that serves as a trough. Into it the water pours from three taps. Behind the wall is a reservoir. A stone conduit brings the water from the true source about a hundred yards nearer the hill. That spring is now covered by a Greek church. It seems probable that Mary took her water from the spring rather than from the predecessor of this structure; for the pilgrim Saewulf in 1103 speaks of columns and tablets of marble that garnished the fountain of Mary. On that spot in the twelfth century the Greeks built a church, the successor to which, the church of St. Gabriel, now stands over the spring. It was there, according to the apocryphal gospel of St. James the Less, that the annunciation took place.

The point of view for our story is at an angle of forty-five degrees to the left of this picture. You can see part of the hill in the background.

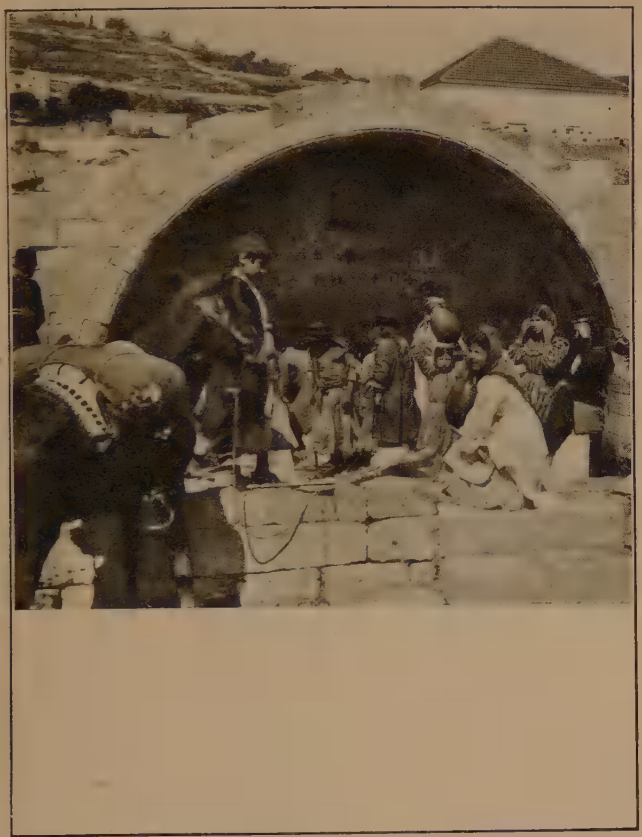

Photo by S. U. Mitman, Ph.D.

MARY'S FOUNTAIN, NAZARETH

MOUNT CARMEL AND THE PLAIN OF ACRE

ESSENTIALLY this view, reduced by distance, may be seen from Nazareth. Down these oak-spotted slopes of the lower Galilean hills winds the road to Haifa. You can discover a caravan there on the right. In the center of the picture is little Harosheth, strategic base for the army of Sisera. Hiding here behind the lower Galilean hills, it could not be discovered by Barak who was mustering on Tabor. Not till Sisera had passed through the narrow defile to the left of the picture, where the Kishon breaks through between the hills and Carmel, did Barak thunder down from his aerie and cut him to pieces.

As one looks south-west from Nazareth the rippling back of Carmel forms the sky-line for nearly forty-five degrees. From the present view-point the ripples are seen to be a succession of half-amalgamated hills that stretch almost to the horizon and then make a bold leap into the sea. Just where they vanish stands Haifa. On the promontory of Carmel that overhangs the sea is the monastery where the order of the Carmelites was founded about 1156 A.D. From that sightly place one may see on the south (our left) the ruins of Athlit, a Crusaders' port of entry; and on the north (our right) St. John of Acre and the steep cliffs known as the Ladder of Tyre. Below the monastery is a cave in which Elijah is said to have lived, and another where the woman from Shunem besought Elisha to restore her son. In the monastery yard is the grave of two thousand of Napoleon's soldiers who were left behind sick in the hurried retreat from Acre and were massacred by the Turks. As everywhere in the world, sacred places in Palestine are the bloodiest.

Photo by S. U. Mitman, Ph.D

MOUNT CARMEL AND THE PLAIN OF ACRE

MOUNT CARMEL AND THE KISHON

IN this picture you are standing on the last bastion of the Galilean hills and looking south across the valley to the glens of Mt. Carmel. To your left is Esdraelon; to your right the plain of Acre. To the right also, eight miles distant, are Haifa and the magnificent bay of Acre on the north promontory of which stands the Roman city of Ptolemais — the Acre of the Crusaders. Following the sky-line of Carmel to the left a couple of miles, you come to the crest where Elijah built his altar. This part of the Kishon is traditionally the spot where he put to death the prophets of Baal.

This grand old hill has been sacred from prehistoric times, doubtless because, "standing at the gateway of the rains" and abounding in springs, it is green when the rest of the land is parched. The Phœnicians peopled it with Baals, whom the Hebrews still found doing business, till Elijah overthrew them for a time. After Jehovah came Zeus, who was supplanted in turn by the deified mountain itself. The Arabs substituted Elijah under the name of the Verdant or the Living One. The Crusaders covered the mountain with chapels, and today the sanctity of the range is perpetuated by Druses, Jews, Christians and Muslims.

The sluggish stream of Kishon rises in the amphitheater of plain behind Mt. Gilboa, and after a tortuous course pushes through this narrow defile. Innocent-looking though it is, Kishon has power in the rainy season to transform the whole plain into a morass. Hence the description of the rout of Sisera's chariotry when Jehovah marched from Edom and the heavens dropped down. Horses cannot fight or run away in a bog.

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MOUNT CARMEL AND THE KISHON

TELL MEGIDDO

YOU are standing on the plain of Esdraelon and looking north-west. Nazareth is ninety degrees to the right. The hill before you is a characteristically-shaped artificial mound such as usually indicates in Palestine the site of a buried city. It is Megiddo.

Our nearness to it makes it hide the back of Carmel, which starting in a bold crest just to the left of our picture foreshortens itself in a wavy descent to the sea twenty miles straight in front of us. Sharp to the left is the sword-cut in the hills known as the Pass of Megiddo, the exit or entrance for all the conquerors of the East from Sargon of Agade, 3700 B.C. (?) to Napoleon and Ibrahim Pasha. Thothmes III of Egypt records having taken this town after defeating on the plain the confederated kings of Palestine. Solomon fortified Megiddo. According to 2 Kings 9:27, Ahaziah died here. Barak fought Sisera here. Here Pharaoh Necho killed Josiah; and the city has been immortalized as Armageddon, where according to Rev. 16:16 the final battle between good and evil will occur.

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TELL MEGIDDO

THE RUINS OF MEGIDDO

YOU are looking north. Nazareth is ju t off the picture to the right, perched on the first range of hills. This hill of Megiddo was excavated in 1902 by a German society. The workmen discovered the remains of several superimposed cities built at six or seven different periods, as is attested by several characteristic buildings and "finds." The ruins of a fortress with a brick rampart twenty-eight feet thick date back probably to 3000 B.C. Babylonian influence is shown by the discovery of cuneiform tablets, gems and cylinder seals. Egyptian civilization is evidenced also, besides Canaanitish, Assyrian and Jewish. The oldest known Hebrew seal was found here, once the property of a high officer of Jeroboam II.

Note in the picture how the small house-walls are huddled together with hardly a trace of streets. Ancient Palestinian cities were as densely populated as rabbit-warrens. They were merely the huts of an agricultural people who cultivated the surrounding plains or hills and repaired to the fortress at night or in time of danger. They were little affairs about the size of the Charlestown navy-yard. Joshua, you recall, could march his whole army round Jericho before breakfast and repeat the performance six times in the day without tiring his men. Jerusalem itself in the time of the great Solomon covered not over a quarter of a square mile — a circumstance that shows how "great" Solomon must have been when compared with the mighty potentates of Thebes and Babylon. Palestine has always been a back-woods country spattered over with petty kinglets in microscopic capitals. The "King of Megiddo" would not make much of a show beside the Mayor of Oshkosh or the Boss of a down-town ward!

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THE RUINS OF MEGIDDO

THE PLAIN OF DOTHAN

LIKE practically all the cities of Palestine, Dothan was built on a hill. It guarded the through caravan route from Damascus and the East to the plain of Sharon and Egypt on the south-west. This picture shows you the wretched village that has succeeded the ancient city, the plain with the caravan trail, and the hills which separate this amphitheater of fields from the long littoral of Sharon. Continuing to the right (north) the hills roll gently up to Carmel with only one serious break at Megiddo; to the left (south) they roll towards the ridges of Samaria, and culminate in Ebal. Through the valley from right to left drew the caravan of Ishmaelites who purchased Joseph to sell in the slave-market of Avaris. In this valley the Syrians made a ring of horsemen about the hill on which we are standing, while on the encircling hills descended the horses and chariots of fire.

No one can ride through the plain of Dothan without a thrill as he realizes that he is treading one of the most ancient highways known to man. Long before our country was dreamed of, the Crusaders filed down this valley, as a millennium earlier the Roman eagles had glittered along the trail. Behind Rome flash the bronze phalanxes of Alexander, and further still the hosts stretch back through the centuries, — 400 years to Sargon II of Assyria, 800 more to Thutmose III of Egypt, 700 more to Hammurabi of Babylon, 1400 more to Sargon I of Agade, till the march of the generations vanishes over the horizon of history. Between these tides of war for six thousand years have flowed the steadier currents of traffic, merchant trains lured by the two great empires in the two great river-valleys of antiquity. Dothan is a gateway on a high road of the nations.

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THE PLAIN OF DOTHAN

THE HILL OF SAMARIA

SAMARIA is not visible from Nazareth, but its position is clearly indicated by a saddle in the hills near the western end of the Ebal-Gerizim sky-line.

It was founded about 875 B.C. by Omri, who bought the hill for military reasons and named it Shomeron (watch-tower), whence the word Samaria. It stands 1454 feet above the Mediterranean, three to four hundred feet above the plain which surrounds it on all sides. The prophet Isaiah saw in it a symbol of the beauty and weakness of northern Israel, — "the proud coronet of the drunkards of Ephraim." Notice the luxuriant olive groves in the picture.

Omri built walls and a palace. Ahab built an "ivory house" for himself and Jezebel, and a Baal temple, which Jehu destroyed. Twice it was besieged by Benhadad I of Syria. Elisha had a home here. It attained its full tide of prosperity under Jeroboam II, and was conquered and destroyed by Sargon II in 722 B.C. after a three-year siege. The city seems to have been rebuilt under Greek rule, for John Hyrcanus destroyed it again in 129 B.C. Rebuilt by Herod about 25 B.C., it flourished till the rise of Nablous in the 4th century A.D. caused its decline. According to Jerome it was the burying-place of Elisha, Obadiah and John the Baptist, whose tombs were shown to pilgrims in the middle ages. Over the tomb of John the Crusaders built a magnificent church, which still stands and serves as a mosque. Its minaret occupies the center of the sky-line in this picture, and the little village it serves crouches like a beggar amid the ruined splendors of the past.

The colonnade of Herod runs to the left, from the village, and leads beneath the slopes of the Acropolis to the west gate — doubtless the gate outside of which the lepers found the abandoned camp of the Syrians.

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THE HILL OF SAMARIA

HEROD'S COLONNADE

ABOUT 25 B.C., after the battle of Actium, the city of Samaria was given to Herod by Augustus, in return for his friendship. Herod rebuilt it magnificently and renamed it after the emperor's wife Augusta (Greek, Sebaste). It was two and a half miles in circumference. The ruins of its strong walls and towers are still visible. The Acropolis occupied the highest crest and contained the palaces and the temple to the divine Augustus. This section was surrounded by a broad terrace adorned with a colonnade one and a half miles long. The picture shows a few of the monoliths that still stand, a third of their sixteen feet buried in the accumulations of the centuries. There were four rows of these columns with a driveway down the center. Under their shadow were booths and shops for traders; for owing to its nearness and accessibility to the sea at Cæsarea, Sebaste was destined to be a commercial city. On this terrace also was the magnificent law-court (Basilica); and lower down, in the natural bays of the north slope of the hill, were a theater and a stadium. The city was colonized by six thousand of Herod's veterans and was purely Græco-Roman in spirit and life. For this reason it is probable that Jesus never entered it, though on his way to and from Jerusalem he doubtless saw it.

In 1908 Harvard University excavated part of the site. They found Herod's temple to Augustus with its altar and statue; under it the palaces of Omri and Ahab, with evidences of rebuilding by Jehu and Rehoboam II. Most interesting were the "ostraca," or pottery tags for wine and oil jars: they were written in the most ancient Hebrew script known, about 700 B.C.

Photo by S. U. Mitman, Ph.D.

HEROD'S COLONNADE

JACOB'S WELL AND MOUNT EBAL

YOU are standing in the plain of Muknah looking north. The mountain is Ebal. A quarter of a mile to the left of the picture you enter the jaws of the defile between Ebal and Gerizim. In these jaws occurred the antiphonal recital of the Blessings and the Cursings by the tribes of Israel, — an easily possible feat, as the writer has personally demonstrated. Up that cleft lies old Shunem (modern Nablous), whose turbulent inhabitants proved no match for the wiles of Jacob, but who later gave Jotham a close call and furnished Abimelech with the "sons of Belial" necessary to his ambition.

More vital than these unedifying episodes of the Old Testament is the story of Jesus at the well. All the elements of that narrative are here. The square spot on Ebal's base is Sychar. Within the walled enclosure is the well itself. This is certainly the well on whose curb Jesus sat while on his way home from Jerusalem, and these are the fields that caught his eye when he said, "The fields are white already with the harvest." It is inspiring to the tradition-ridden traveler to come at last upon a spot where he may say, "Jesus was assuredly here!"

Nazareth lies directly through the mountain, thirty miles away. Since Ebal is the highest point on the horizon as one looks south from Nazareth, the location of Jacob's well is easily determined even from that distance.

Photo by S. U. Mitman, Ph.D.

JACOB'S WELL AND MOUNT EBAL

RUINS AT JACOB'S WELL

YOU are standing within the walled enclosure looking nearly north-east. Over the hill the high land of Samaria sinks rapidly and roughly to the Jordan valley.

The ruins belong to a beautiful church built by the crusaders and destroyed by Saladin in 1187 A.D. It was preceded by a series of churches built by the pious of earlier centuries, and is now being replaced by another built exactly on the lines of the crusading edifice. In the construction are being used some beautiful monolithic columns of Egyptian red granite which undoubtedy have survived from the earliest Christian basilica.

In a crypt of solid masonry is the well, now curbed with a block of stone that is sawed deeply by the ropes of the generations. This may have been and probably is the very stone on which Jesus sat when he talked with the woman of Samaria. As we stand here and look down into the shaft, we seem to hear, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with and the well is deep." Looking up the stairway of the crypt, beyond the rising church walls, we see the rugged top of old Gerizim, crowned with the shapeless ruins of saints' tombs, temples, churches, and fortresses, mute witness to the struggles through which the Samaritans have maintained their worship to this day. We are standing on holy ground. This well is a landmark in the spiritual evolution of man. Here was first pronounced the truth that God is worshiped neither at Jerusalem not in this mountain, but in the soul of the individual.

Photo by S. U. Mitman, Ph.D.

RUINS AT JACOB'S WELL

VIEW NORTH FROM JEZREEL

YOU are now at one of the inspiring view-points in Palestine. Nazareth lies just off the picture to the left, Gilboa ninety degrees to the right. Behind you is the south-east end of Esdraelon, from which point the plain runs north-west along the base of the hills of Samaria, till it reaches its western apex at Mt. Carmel. The sense of space here is inspiring. Not till you have stood on Jezreel can you appreciate the description of this plain in the Blessing of Jacob, nor realize how its roads laid it open to the spoiler on every side:

Issachar is a large-limbed ass
Stretching himself between the sheep-folds:
For he saw a resting-place that was good,
And the land that it was pleasant.
So he bowed his shoulder to bear
And became a servant under task-work.

This village of Jezreel was the seat of Ahab's summer palace and of Naboth's vineyard. The rich vale of Jezreel begins in front of you at the sea level, and sinks rapidly to the Jordan some seven hundred feet below sea level on your right (east). The mountain is Moreh or Little Hermon. Shunem is the dark smooch near the left edge of the picture and at the foot of the mountain. Nain is directly through the mountain. It was this whole slope of Moreh that the Midianites occupied, and it was these fields they reaped before Gideon made them think of home.

These hills have looked down upon a pageant of history unmatched elsewhere in the world: on the elephants of Antiochus, the legions of Pompey who restored the liberties of the Decapolis, the litters of Cleopatra as she followed the eagles of Antony, victorious Vespasian, the hosts of Saladin driving before them the bannered lances of the Crusaders, and the hordes of the Bedouin who every century stamp out in the name of the Prophet whatever of civilization past wars have spared. More than fifty battles have been fought on these plains or near them. The last one of consequence occurred a mile beyond the west end of Moreh, where Napoleon's monstrous dream of world-conquest vanished under the fierce onslaught of Turkish cavalry.

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VIEW NORTH FROM JEZREEL

GIDEON'S FOUNTAIN

THIS noble spring, called Gideon's Fountain or the Well of Harod, bursts out of the ground at the foot of a cave on the north slope of Mt. Gilboa. The mass of the mountain rises abruptly above the water and the stream sinks away towards the left (east) down the valley of Jezreel to Bethshan and the Jordan. Gideon's men rendezvoused in the glens above this spring, drank after the fashion of their modern successors in this picture, and after making a flanking march to the west drove the Midianites down the valley eastward and over the "lip" of Jordan to Gilead. Saul tried to make this spring his base and the mountain his rear-guard; but the Philistine impact drove the host of Israel up the steep slope into the blind glens and wadies above, and there annihilated it.

The writer never appreciated how easily an army could be confused here till he rode over Gilboa from the south and lost his way in the endeavor to find this spring. While from a distance the mountain looks fairly smooth and bare, he found that in reality it is cut up into ravines and hollows from which there is either no exit or only a narrow rocky glen where one man might stay a thousand. The paths down to the plain were so steep and rough that he had to lead his horse most of the way. Then the patches of thorn-bush and scrub make ambushes inevitable and most effective. If Saul had not already been beaten in his heart before the battle, the Philistines could never have taken the mountain. As it was, panic made of these wild wadies a veritable slaughter-pen.

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GIDEON'S FOUNTAIN

NAIN AND MOUNT TABOR

YOU are looking about north-east. To your right, three miles away, is Endor; to your left six miles Nazareth perches on its hills. The top of Tabor in front of you is five miles distant as the bee flies. Your back is against Moreh.

Nain is a mean village of one hundred and fifty Muslim inhabitants. It was raised from oblivion for a day by our Lord's immortal act, and then sank back to its proper doom. The only objects of interest are the tumble-down caravanserai on the roof of which you are standing, and the modest chapel in the middle ground built on the site of a Crusaders' church, which commemorated the raising of the widow's son.

The splendid dome of Tabor is fairly well wooded with scrub-oaks. The ruined fortifications on top, which do not show in the picture, are the work of Antiochus the Great, Josephus, and Melik the brother of Saladin. There are also within the enclosure a monastery belonging to the Latins and another to the Greeks. Their accompanying churches are the successors of those built by the Crusaders, which succeeded others of the fourth century, which in turn represented the tabernacles that Peter proposed to build at the time of the Transfiguration. Each sect, of course, claims to have the only and original site! However, the identification of Tabor with the Mount of Transfiguration is erroneous — though the monks have not yet heard how the scholars have put them out of business!

The view from Tabor is superb, particularly toward the north-east and south-east; great Hermon limiting the view on the one hand, and the high level line of Gilead the other. You can trace practically the whole course of the Jordan from its rise among the roots of Hermon southward to the sea of Galilee; then sinking rapidly through the Ghor till the mist of distance hides alike the cleft and its containing mountains. The rich agricultural possibilities of this country strike one with peculiar force as the eye traverses from this elevation the swelling bosoms and the black-loamed undulating valleys of Galilee.

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NAIN AND MOUNT TABOR

THE SEA OF GALILEE

THIS is one of the best views of the Sea of Galilee. It is taken from the Nazareth road as it winds down over the mountain. You are looking south-east. The walled city of Tiberias is in the foreground. On the left are the steep slopes of the country of the Gergasenes, where the swine were drowned. On the right, just beyond the promontory, is the site of Taricheæ, famed in Jesus' day for its pickled fish. Zebedee and his sons doubtless sold fish there for export to Rome. The exit of the Jordan is just beyond also. The table-land in the exact center of the picture is crowned with the ruins of Gadara, one of the cities of the Decapolis — a perfectly superb site, and superbly occupied by a city that did credit to the energy of Rome and the culture of Greece.

Immediately below its site, to the left, the sulphur-springs of Gadara burst from the ground and form great pools as blue as a robin's egg and as hot and evil-smelling as Gehenna. Ancient rheumatics and valetudinarians used to come hither even from Rome to drink the famous wine of the country, to eat the luscious grapes, to soak in the soothing waters, to enjoy the strange types of humanity that drifted through the colonnaded streets of Gadara, to laugh at the provincial actors in the town theater, and doubtless to kick about their accommodations at the provincial hotels! This city must have been a perpetual challenge to Jesus — a challenge that owing to early prejudice he resisted till nearly the end of his ministry. With what amazement must he have seen for the first time the flux of humanity eddying through this foreign town, as intent upon business and sin as he was upon his weird gospel of love and trust.

Tiberias, founded by Herod Antipas 16–22 A.D., was a city abhorred by pious Jews because of its intensely Roman character. Although so near the center of Jesus' ministry there is hardly a reference to it in the New Testament. Jesus probably never entered it. After the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70, Tiberias became the chief seat of the Jewish nation.

Stereograph copyrighted by H. C. White Co.

THE SEA OF GALILEE

THE PLAIN OF GENNESARET

THIS picture is taken from Khan Minyeh on the northwest corner of the Sea of Galilee. You look over a level and once fertile plain, covered in Jesus' day with a score of prosperous villages. Magdala, home of Mary Magdalene, lies at the foot of the hills at the extreme left. Above it, the highest point of land is the abrupt volcanic cliff whose caves were for ages the haunt of robbers. Herod the Great, while still a youth, made his reputation as a soldier by sending a body of troops in cages down the face of the cliff and smoking the bandits out. Mt. Tabor lies to the right of this peak. To the right of Tabor and impinging upon it are the Horns of Hattin, a broken crater on whose slopes Jesus is (erroneously) said to have uttered the Sermon on the Mount. Here Saladin broke the flower of European chivalry in 1187 A.D. and after seven assaults captured the tent of the Latin King of Jerusalem on its summit. The hill of Nazareth — our view-point — appears faintly about half an inch from the right-hand corner of the picture. Across the plain almost at your feet runs the great caravan trunk line on its way from the East to the sea and Egypt. Matthew was a custom-house officer on this line. His station, Capernaum, is behind you to the left, about two miles away.

You are therefore in this picture at the very heart of the Gospels. It was here that Jesus healed the sick, stilled the tempest, cast out demons, fed the hungry, preached good tidings to the poor, spoke his immortal parables, found his friends and made his enemies. And all this work was done under conditions of climate that most of us have never realized. This plain lies in a sweltering hollow six hundred and eighty-two feet below sea level. On a hundred and sixty-three days of the year the temperature is above ninety degrees, and on forty-five of these it is more than one hundred degrees.

Photo by S. U. Milman, Ph.D.

THE PLAIN OF GENNESARET

A CARAVAN

PRECISELY this kind of freight train has passed over the trunk roads of Galilee since the dawn of civilization. From the miscellaneous assortment of bundles on this caravan one might judge this to be a return trip, and the freight to be kerosene, tobacco, matches, fire-arms and the like, all products of the West. The down-load was undoubtedly grain. In Jesus' day the "through trains" westward belonged to merchants carrying goodly pearls and other gems, together with the spices, the medicines, the indigo, the rich garments, the slave-eunuchs, carpets and leather of the East; the "locals" carried grain from the Hauran, pickled fish from the Sea of Galilee, linen, wool, raisins and wine. Eastward trains brought as today the luxuries of the West, — the manufactures of Alexandria and the Greek cities of the Mediterranean, articles of bronze and pottery, of iron and tin, the household and military equipment of the soldiers and governors. The lines of the Roman roads can still be traced by the current ones, by the fragments of pavement and the great caravaserais, mostly now in ruin.

Unfortunately this caravan is traveling on a carriage road such as did not exist in Jesus' day. The usual trail is not a road at all. Often it is not a single path but a maze of paths, little trails that interlace and fuse and ramify, that drift sideways up a hill in the rainy season to avoid the mud, and drift downward in the dry to avoid the hills. But if the trails sprawl over the valleys, they collect themselves in the passes. Where the limestone ledges begin to crop, the huddling feet fall century after century in the same spot. Where a whole stratum protrudes terrace-wise, it becomes slippery with the attrition of ages; now and then the trail is filled with jagged chunks that roll under your horse's tread and offer the same thoroughfare that a ruined wall might; but whether smooth or rough, it is all brown with the treading of generations, "merchants — Ishmaelites — with their camels, going down to Egypt."

Photo by S. U. Mitman, Ph.D.

A CARAVAN

SEPPHORIS

THIS view represents Sepphoris as seen from the Nazareth-Cana road. You are facing north-west. The old town looks for all the world like a barnacled rock emerging from the green waves of the valley While less elevated than Nazareth it is delightfully situated. Its copious springs and its dominating position have made it a stronghold and determined its history. Not mentioned in the Bible, it has for us an interest as the traditional birthplace of St. Joachim, the father of the Virgin. As early as the fourth century Count Joseph of Tiberias believed that the parents of the Virgin lived here, for he built a basilica on the site of their home. By the sixth century a chapel stood on the spot where Mary was said to have been hailed by the angel. Sepphoris and Nazareth are thus at loggerheads about the location of this particular event.

Although its entire population is Muslim the city is sacred to the Jews, for in 180 A.D. the Great Sanhedrim, unable to convene in paganized Jerusalem took up its abode here till a Jewish revolt in 339 A.D., caused the destruction of the city.

Sepphoris fades from history on the fateful eve of the battle of Hattin. All the Christian leaders assembled here, — Guy the Latin King of Jerusalem, Reginald the perfidious Lord of Kerak, Raymond of Tripoli and Tiberias, Balian the Master of the Temple, who here paid over to Guy the gold sent by King Henry of England in expiation of Becket's murder. And here the fatal mistake was made of leaving the springs and advancing over a waterless plain to the Horns of Hattin, where on July 4th, 1187, the flower of European knighthood perished of thirst and wounds under a pitiless sun and the resistless charges of Saladin.

Photo by S. U. Mitman, Ph.D.

SEPPHORIS

(The light patch beginning on the middle hill under the cross and extending an inch to the left.)

PTOLEMAIS (ACRE)

THIS town of many names first comes to light in the Tell el-Amarna tablets (fourteenth century B.C.) as Acca. The book of Judges calls it Accho. During the Greek period the Egyptian ruler of Palestine renamed it Ptolemais, and as such it was known in the time of Christ, when it was port of entry for all Syria. By the seventh century A.D. the Arabs had restored its old name. The crusaders took it, re-christened it St. John of Acre, and made it the chief bulwark of Christian dominion in the East. Richard of England and Saladin have popularized it by their deeds of valor beneath its walls. During its long and stormy history it has suffered at least twenty-three sieges. Among the great names connected with it are Sennacherib, Alexander, Herod the Great, St. Paul, Baldwin, St. Francis of Assisi, and Napoleon.

Though the town itself is not visible from Nazareth, one can easily discern the ships in the bay, if the air is clear.

Photo by S. U. Mitman, Ph.D.

PTOLEMAIS (ACRE)

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Bailey, Albert Edward, 1871-1951.
On Nazareth hill.

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